

Patent /Atty. Docket No. 34321.3
Customer No. 000027683

III. REMARKS

A. Status of the Application

Claims 33-34, 36, 42-43, 45-48, 50-52 and 69-71 are pending. Claims 1-32, 35, 37-41, 44, 49 and 53-68 have been cancelled. Claims 33, 42, 69 and 70 have been amended. It is respectfully submitted that claims 33, 42, 69 and 70, as amended, are supported by the specification as filed and are in condition for allowance or at least in better form for consideration on appeal. Also, claims 33, 42, 69 and 70, as amended, do not raise any new issues which require further search or substantial consideration on the part of the Examiner. Specifically, the amendments of claim 33 are made to place original claim 68 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and all intervening claims. The amendments of claims 42 and 69 are made to make these claims depend from claim 33 and the amendment of claim 70 is made to correct a clerical error. For these reasons, it is requested that this amendment be entered under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116 as it places the application in condition for allowance or at least in better condition for appeal. Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 68 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but was indicated to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Original claim 68 was dependent upon claims 33 and 67. Claim 33 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 67 and 68 which has the effect of placing claim 68 in independent form. Accordingly, for this reason it is respectfully submitted that claim 33 is in condition for allowance.

The remaining claims, i.e. claims 34, 36, 42-43, 45-48, 50-52 and 69-71, depend from and include the subject matter of claim 33 and are, therefore, in condition for allowance for the same reason that claim 33 is in condition for allowance.

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C. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-4, 7-8, 10-11, 13-15, 17-18, 21-23, 25-28, 33-36, 39-40, 42-43, 45-48, 50, 52-54, 57-61, 63, 65 and 70-71 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 2,185,666 to Hill ("Hill"). Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

As noted above, claims 1-4, 7-8, 10-11, 13-15, 17-18, 21-23, 25-28, 35, 39-40, 53-54, 57-61, 63 and 65 have been cancelled. Also as noted above, claim 33, as amended, is in condition for allowance and claims 34, 36, 42-43, 45-48, 50, 52, 70 and 71 which depend from claim 33 similarly are in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-4, 7-8, 10-11, 13-15, 17-18, 21-23, 25-28, 33-36, 39-40, 42-43, 45-48, 50, 52-54, 57-61, 63, 65 and 70-71 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Hill has been overcome and it is respectfully requested that it be withdrawn.

D. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 51, 62, 64 and 66 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hill in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,335,443 to Grigsby ("Grigsby"). Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 33, 67 and 69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,691,449 to Hoben in view of Hill. Insofar as it may be applied against the present claims, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

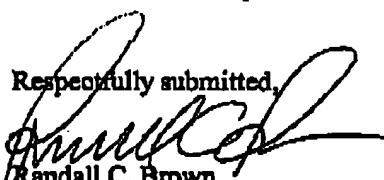
As noted above, claims 62, 64, 66, and 67 have been cancelled. Also as noted above, claim 33, as amended, is in condition for allowance and claims 51 and 69 which depend from claim 33 similarly are in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 33, 51, 62, 64, 66, 67 and 69 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) have been overcome and it is respectfully requested that they be withdrawn.

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E. Conclusion

Claims 33-34, 36, 42-43, 45-48, 50-52 and 69-71 are now pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested. The examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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